

The Free Lance-Star

Nats go young in draft

Washington picks high school SS Willits with first pick in MLB draft. **SPORTS, PAGE B1**



Green is no-go

Ghost factories tell fate of industry. **BUSINESS, PAGE A6**



MARGO WAGNER PHOTOS, RICHMOND TIMES-DISPATCH

The exterior of St. Margaret's School in Tappahannock is seen Friday. Just 49 students have paid enrollment deposits, which is not nearly enough to cover the school's operating budget, said Henry Broaddus, president of Church Schools in the Diocese of Virginia (CSDV), the Henrico County-based nonprofit that owns St. Margaret's.

St. Margaret's School to close due to financial problems

ERIC KOLENICH
Richmond Times-Dispatch

St. Margaret's School, a century-old, all-girls school in Tappahannock, will close for the 2025-26 school year, the school's owner said Thursday.

The school has dealt with growing financial problems and a shrinking enrollment in recent years. Just 49 students have paid enrollment deposits, which is not nearly enough to cover the school's operating budget, said Henry Broaddus, president of Church Schools in the Diocese of Virginia (CSDV), the Henrico County-based nonprofit that owns St. Margaret's.

Students who paid deposits will receive refunds, and staff will work with students to find them a new school this fall. As a boarding school, St. Margaret's houses some students on campus, while others commute back and forth.

The 27 faculty and staff under contract will receive their salary and benefits through July, and CSDV will offer them severance. Donors who contributed to St. Margaret's in an effort to save it can ask for a refund.

"In the meantime, we know that all will receive this decision with the same sadness we feel," Broaddus said in a letter to the school community. "We understand that some will feel anger in response to this loss. We hope that all will support one another."

St. Margaret's opened in 1921 on the banks of the Rappahannock River, an hour northeast of Richmond. It took in students displaced from Afghanistan and won conference championships in softball. But the school for high school girls experienced a drop in enrollment during the past decade, from 130 students in 2009 to 70 last year.

To attract more students, St. Margaret's discounted tuition, leading to lower revenue and an operating deficit that grew to a projected \$2.6 million this



A section of the campus of St. Margaret's School is seen Friday. The school's owner said Thursday that the century-old school in Tappahannock would close for the 2025-26 school year because of growing financial problems and shrinking enrollment.

year. The school charges about \$22,000 annually for day students and \$62,000 for those who live on campus seven days a week. Over the years, CSDV drew down the endowment and sold real estate to cover the deficit.

At the end of 2024, CSDV notified St. Margaret's that it needed to raise the \$2.6 million for the school to open this fall. CSDV owns five other Episcopal schools in the state, including St. Catherine's and St. Christopher's in Richmond.

It took St. Margaret's just two months to collect donations and pledges for \$2.6 million. Supporters thought they had saved the school. But in May, the owner notified St. Margaret's that it was still not on track to becoming financially solvent. Only 53 students had enrolled, short of the 70 projected, and most of the donors had not yet signed their checks.

In early June, CSDV notified

the school community that St. Margaret's ability to open was at risk. A St. Margaret's parent, Brett Christina Glymph, filed a lawsuit requesting an injunction that would prevent CSDV from taking any action that would interfere with the school's ability to collect donations and increase enrollment. A hearing is scheduled for Wednesday in Essex County Circuit Court, and it is unclear if the lawsuit could impact CSDV's intention to close the school.

"Obviously we're very disappointed with the decision," said Chap Petersen, a Fairfax-based lawyer for the plaintiff. "We feel like the rug was pulled out from under us."

The school community raised \$2.7 million and attracted a minimum number of students who could keep the school open, Petersen said. Generations of families have donated to the school over the years, the lawyer added,

essentially creating a trust St. Margaret's has to honor.

"All things are possible in Christ," he said.

The board of trustees for CSDV met Thursday and determined St. Margaret's would not open for the 2025-26 school year. No decision has been made beyond the upcoming year, Broaddus said in an email.

"Unfortunately, following more than a decade of declines in both student enrollment and tuition revenue, as well as the likelihood of continued decline in the upcoming year, the trustees see no viable path forward," Broaddus wrote to the school community.

Though the school community raised more money than what was originally pledged, the lack of tuition revenue means St. Margaret's still lacks the financial reserves to cover potential

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Man seriously injured after being shot in the head

KEITH EPPS
The Free Lance-Star

A Colonial Beach man turned himself in Sunday after allegedly shooting a man in the head Saturday night at a racetrack just outside the town, police said.

Dwayne E. Newman, 47, is charged with malicious wounding and using a firearm in the commission of a felony. Westmoreland Sheriff C.O. Balderson said more charges are pending.

Balderson said 52-year-old Eric Fauntleroy of Hague was shot about 8 p.m. at Custom T's Motorsports on Longfield Road between Colonial Beach and Oak Grove. Fauntleroy was rushed to Mary Washington Hospital with serious injuries following the shooting; he was still alive as of Sunday.

Newman left the scene after the shooting, Balderson said, but turned himself in at the Westmoreland Sheriff's Office Sunday, where he was interviewed by detectives.

It was unclear Sunday what led to the shooting, Balderson said.

It was at least the second time in less than two years that someone was shot at the racetrack. On Sept. 30, 2023, a 42-year-old Petersburg man was shot twice in the leg and twice in the arms following a verbal dispute.

The victim told police he didn't know the man who shot him, and it was unclear Sunday whether anyone had ever been arrested in that case.

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GETTING THERE

Crashes down so far in 2025

Work on a Lafayette Boulevard shared-use path connector has wrapped up four months ahead of schedule.

The Virginia Department of Transportation reported the completion last week on the \$2.4 million project, which started in early December and



SCOTT SHENK

was scheduled for completion in November.

The work included an extension of the 10-foot-wide path, for pedestrians and bicyclists, along the north side of

Lafayette Boulevard between Twin Lake Drive and St. Paul Street.

Crosswalks were added where the path intersects with Twin Lake Drive, Springwood Drive, Kensington Place and St. Paul Street. New pedestrian signal crossing equipment also were installed at the Lafayette and Twin Lakes intersection.

The path includes ramps for people with disabilities.

Other aspects of the project included the addition of a paved access point to the

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Weather
Heavy afternoon t-storms
High 85 • Low 73
FORECAST • B10

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